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CONGRESSMAN
TONY HALL NEWS

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182 HOUSE MEMBERS TELL SHULTZ CONCERN OVER EAST TIMOR CONFLICT

WASHINGTON -- A Bipartisan group of 182 House members will send a letter to Secretary of State Shultz on Monday calling for "expansion of access to East Timor by international humanitarian agencies" and a "joint solution" to the long military conflict in the Southeast Asian island territory.

The letter states, "As the 100th Congress adjourns, we would urge both this Administration and the next Administration to take action to address the situation in East Timor," the predominantly Roman Catholic former Portuguese colony invaded by Indonesia in 1975.

According to Rep. Tony P. Hall, principal author of the letter, nearly one-fifth of East Timor's original population of less than 700,000 people have died from the combined effects of Indonesia's invasion and subsequent military operations in the territory. Indonesia's invasion was carried out largely with military equipment supplied by the United States.

Noting that it is clear that armed conflict persists in East Timor, the letter says, "The continuing conflict in East Timor has contributed, both directly and indirectly, to food shortages and health problems for a significant number of East Timorese civilians in some areas of the territory."

The 182 House members, including 29 Republicans, represent the largest single expression of House concern over the East Timor tragedy. Two-thirds of the members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee signed the letter, including the chairman.

"The growing concern in Congress is a clear sign that the next Administration will be forced to deal with the human rights problems and continuing conflict in East Timor," said Hall, who has been pressing the Timorese case since he came to Congress in 1979.

The letter noted that concern over the East Timor situation has been expressed by Amnesty International, Asia Watch, the United States Catholic Conference, and Pope John Paul II, in addition to the European Parliament.

The 182 House members underscored their support for the 1987 position taken by the Administrative Board of the United States Catholic Bishops Conference, which called for "appropriate representations by the United States [to] influence the

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government of Indonesia to take measures that would help to bring a just and authentic peace" to East Timor.

The House letter called on the United States to "work with Indonesia, Portugal and other interested participants to help facilitate a peaceful and just solution" to the Timor conflict.

"Given the constructive role Indonesia is playing in seeking an end to the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, we believe it is appropriate for a similar effort to be made regarding East Timor," the letter states.

The letter notes that certain improvements have occurred in East Timor in recent years, but points out that there continue to be human rights concerns, such as reports of torture and intimidation of Catholic clergy and other Timorese, and lack of international access to the territory.

The text of the letter follows:

Honorable George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We wish to express our deep concern about the situation in East Timor, the predominantly Roman Catholic former Portuguese colony invaded by Indonesia in 1975. We commend the efforts you have made over the years to raise human rights issues regarding East Timor with Indonesian officials.

We are mindful that certain improvements have occurred in East Timor in recent years. Nevertheless, it is clear that armed conflict persists in the territory. In this regard it should be noted that four Members of the European Parliament who visited East Timor in August expressed surprise at the current high level of Indonesia's military presence there.

The continuing conflict in East Timor has contributed, both directly and indirectly, to food shortages and health problems for a significant number of East Timorese civilians in some areas of the territory. We believe that the reports of persistent fighting and ongoing shortages of food and medical supplies in East Timor merit the concern of the United States Congress. As the 100th Congress adjourns, we would urge both this Administration and the next Administration to take action to address the situation in East Timor.

We are concerned by the implication of Indonesian Defense Minister Benny Murdani's recent remark that East Timor is only "open to selected people." We seek efforts by the United States Government to ensure both the continuation and the expansion of access to East Timor by international humanitarian agencies. We further urge that freedom of movement be guaranteed for these agencies so that the full range of their humanitarian activities may be carried out to the greatest extent possible.

Other international observers have expressed concern over the continuing human rights and human needs problems in East Timor, as well as other aspects of the persistent conflict in the territory. Amnesty International and Asia Watch have noted reports of torture of Timorese political detainees, particularly in outlying areas of East Timor. The United States Catholic Conference has emphasized the "pressing need to guarantee freedom of expression for, and an end to intimidation of" the indigenous Roman Catholic Church in East Timor, in addition to a range of other concerns. Pope John Paul II late last year stressed the need for respect for the ethnic, religious, and cultural identity of the Timorese people. In recent months, the European Parliament also has expressed its concern about

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In recent months, the European Parliament also has expressed its concern about current developments in East Timor.

In 1987, the Administrative Board of the United States Catholic Bishops Conference called for "appropriate representations by the United States" to "influence the government of Indonesia to take measures that would help bring a just and authentic peace" to East Timor. We wish to underscore our support for this position.

In light of the current efforts toward negotiated settlement of several long-term conflicts in various parts of the world, we believe that the United States should work with Indonesia, Portugal, and other interested participants to help facilitate a peaceful and just solution to the conflict in East Timor, which has endured now for 13 years. Given the constructive role Indonesia is playing in seeking an end to the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, we believe it is appropriate for a similar effort to be made regarding East Timor.

We support strong and friendly relations with Indonesia. It is our belief that these ties will be strengthened by prompt attention to the humanitarian and human rights problems of East Timor, as well as by negotiated efforts to secure an authentic peace for the territory.

Sincerely,

Morris K. Udall (D-Ariz.)
Bill Alexander (D-Ark.)
Tommy F. Robinson (D-Ark.)
Jim Bates (D-Calif.)
Anthony C. Beilenson (D-Calif.)
Howard L. Berman (D-Calif.)
Douglas H. Bosco (D-Calif.)
Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.)
George E. Brown, Jr. (D-Calif.)
Tony Coelho (D-Calif.)
Ronald V. Dellums (D-Calif.)
Julian C. Dixon (D-Calif.)
Robert K. Dornan (R-Calif.)
Mervyn M. Dymally (D-Calif.)
Don Edwards (D-Calif.)
Vic Fazio (D-Calif.)
Augustus F. Hawkins (D-Calif.)
Tom Lantos (D-Calif.)
Richard H. Lehman (D-Calif.)
Mel Levine (D-Calif.)
Robert T. Matsui (D-Calif.)
George Miller (D-Calif.)
Leon E. Panetta (D-Calif.)
Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.)
Fortney H. Stark (D-Calif.)
Esteban Edward Torres (D-Calif.)
Henry A. Waxman (D-Calif.)
Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.)
Sam Gejdenson (D-Conn.)
Barbara B. Kennelly (D-Conn.)
Bruce A. Morrison (D-Conn.)
John G. Rowland (R-Conn.)
Christopher Shays (R-Conn.)
Thomas R. Carper (D-Del.)
Walter E. Fauntroy (D-D.C.)
Dante B. Fascell (D-Fla.)
Earl Hutto (D-Fla.)
William Lehman (D-Fla.)
Bill Nelson (D-Fla.)
Claude Pepper (D-Fla.)
Lawrence J. Smith (D-Fla.)
John Lewis (D-Ga.)
Daniel K. Akaka (D-Hawaii)
Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.)
Lane Evans (D-Ill.)
Kenneth J. Gray (D-Ill.)
Charles A. Hayes (D-Ill.)
William O. Lipinski (D-Ill.)
John Edward Porter (R-Ill.)
Marty Russo (D-Ill.)
Gus Savage (D-Ill.)
Lee H. Hamilton (D-Ind.)
Frank McCloskey (D-Ind.)
Thomas J. Tauke (R-Iowa)
David R. Nagle (D-Iowa)
Dan Glickman (D-Kans.)
Jan Meyers (R-Kans.)
Jim Slattery (D-Kans.)
Joseph E. Brennan (D-Maine)
Helen Delich Bentley (R-Md.)
Benjamin L. Cardin (D-Md.)
Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.)
Thomas C. McMillen (D-Md.)
Kweisi Mfume (D-Md.)
Constance A. Morella (R-Md.)
Chester G. Atkins (D-Mass.)
Edward P. Boland (D-Mass.)
Silvio O. Conte (R-Mass.)
Barney Frank (D-Mass.)
Joseph P. Kennedy II (D- Mass.)
Edward J. Markey (D-Mass)
Nicholas Mavroules (D-Mass.)
Joe Moakley (D-Mass.)
Gerry E. Studds (D-Mass.)
David E. Bonior (D-Mich.)
Bob Carr (D-Mich.)
John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.)
George W. Crockett, Jr. (D-Mich.)
Dale E. Kildee (D-Mich.)
Sander M. Levin (D-Mich.)
Howard Wolpe (D-Mich.)
James L. Oberstar (D-Minn.)
Timothy J. Penny (D-Minn.)
Martin Olav Sabo (D-Minn.)
Gerry Sikorski (D-Minn.)
Bruce F. Vento (D-Minn.)
Mike Espy (D-Miss.)
William Clay (D-Mo.)
Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.)
Ike Skelton (D-Mo.)
Pat Williams (D-Mont.)
Doug Bereuter (R-Nebr.)
Hal Daub (R-Nebr.)
James H. Bilbray (D-Nev.)
William J. Hughes (D-N.J.)
Matthew J. Rinaldo (R-N.J.)

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Robert G. Torricelli (D-N.J.)
Bill Richardson (D-N.Mex.)
Gary L. Ackerman (D-N.Y.)
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Hamilton Fish, Jr. (R-N.Y.)
Robert Garcia (D-N.Y.)
Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.)
Bill Green (R-N.Y.)
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Frank Horton (R-N.Y.)
Amo Houghton (R-N.Y.)
Matthew F. McHugh (D-N.Y.)
Thomas J. Manton (D-N.Y.)
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Major R. Owens (D-N.Y.)
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Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.)
Louise McIntosh Slaughter (D-N.Y.)
Edolphus Towns (D-N.Y.)
Ted Weiss (D-N.Y.)
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Mary Rose Oakar (D-Ohio)
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Thomas C. Sawyer (D-Ohio)
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Mike Synar (D-Okla.)
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Austin J. Murphy (D-Pa.)
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Gus Yatron (D-Pa.)
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Fernand J. St Germain (D-R.I.)
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Jim Cooper (D-Tenn.)
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John Bryant (D-Tex.)
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Martin Frost (D-Tex.)
Henry B. Gonzalez (D-Tex.)
Mickey Leland (D-Tex.)
Charles W. Stenholm (D-Tex.)
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Jim Moody (D-Wis.)

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